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EAST AND WEST SERIES

No. 69 Double Number Oct.–Nov., 1961

9/227

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THE RISHI

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T. L. VASWANI

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EAST AND WEST SERIES

[Monthly]

AN INTERPRETER OF THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT

9/227

THE RISHI

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IMPORTANT

Kindly note that this is a Double Number for the two months, September and October, 1961.

—The Manager

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WHAT THEY WRITE TO US

The "East and West Series" is for me like coming home.

My Guru, Jesus, has said :—"In my Father's house are many mansions." You have shown that this is truly so. And Jesus said :—"If it were not so I would have told you."

(Miss) B. Chapman
Worcs., England

Every number of the "East and West Series" is enjoyable, full of wisdom and enlightenment, and when I have finished with it, I pass it on to others so that the blessings may be further distributed.....I have always been broad-minded, and do not care to be bound by any one creed or sect, but can see good in all, though no one particular lot has the whole truth. Some hold very narrow beliefs, and say that they are the only ones who will reach Heaven,—everyone else will go to eternal damnation, but I could never accept views like that.....As a matter of fact, your last combined issue (Ten Witnesses) was really splendid, and I always like to read of the saintly lives of India's renowned saints, as there have been in other lands throughout the ages—each one bringing some special message to aid that particular time.

Kathie Anderson
Auckland, New Zealand

Neither posterity nor eternity can reward the labours of Shri T. L. Vaswani, the mystic philosopher. His writings are a source of endless inspiration to all lovers of culture. The "East and West Series" will continue to serve as a beacon light for a long time to come.

Dr. Brahmachari Atmanandayee Tirtha, M. A., M. D.
Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh

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IN QUEST

I was out in quest.

Science and faith, philosophy and religion, literature and art, time and space had I questioned in search of truth. But the question remained :—"What is truth?"

The longing to know grew within me. But O, for a man, I said, who would unveil the face of Truth!

I wandered from place to place : I talked to pundits and preachers, to monks and *maulvis*, to professors and priests. I questioned : I listened : I questioned again.

Suddenly, I heard a few say :—"One is come,—a *rishi*, a messenger, an apostle of the Ancient Wisdom." How my heart throbbed! I longed to see him.

I called. I saw. What a Figure! Big head, bright hair, radiant face, tall form, glowing eyes. They gazed at me graciously. He sat in his Ashram garden. The flowers bloomed. And underneath a tall tree he sat. Calm was his countenance and eloquent was his silence.

I bowed down to him in reverence. He smiled. He made a sign with his hand. I sat down. I looked at him, again and again : I gazed at his wonderful, velvety eyes. Was something emanating from them to influence me? For sometime I was absorbed in reflections.

"What a man!" I said to myself. "India's culture is becoming a memory of the past. The true Indian civilisation is being trampled upon by a new barbarism of the West. The strength is going out of the sinews of the Hindu race. Our ancient cities are humbled with a vassalage of Western industrialism and Western shouts of "progress." And here sits a man undisturbed by the thundering legions of the West, calm in countenance, smiling in the face of the

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audacious irreverence of an alien civilisation, silent and strong, and in silence unifying thought and life. Yet when he opes his lips to speak, he thrills, he inspires, he enthrals the minds and hearts of men. Here is a man who sits far from the madding crowds of critics and controversialists, a man who rings the bell that calls the servants of truth to come together in one ministry of healing to the modern world. Here is a man who carries, in his brave, beautiful heart, the spirit of the Ancient Wisdom, the spirit of reverence at once for culture and craftsmanship."

I sat gazing at his mystic face. He fixed his strange, hypnotic eyes on me. The gaze of those wonderful eyes! Their hidden power held me spell-bound : and for several minutes I forget my surroundings and the Ashram scenery. I forgot my body, myself!

Here is a man, I said, who is humble and quiet and who yet seems to be a century in advance of his time. The essential wisdom of this man is enshrined in the central thought of India. He dares to believe in the Spirit (the *Atman*), and he realises the value of the individual in building up a new social order. He dares, too, to affirm the thought of the Hindu mystics that the Eternal is not an illusion but the Verity that is for ever above the flux of time. Here is a man who, in the midst of modern socialism, has the courage to re-word the teaching of the Upanishads :—"*Tena tyaktena bhunjitha!*" Rejoice in the life which renounces, which does not grasp but gives, which looks askance at the idea of "inheritance." Here is a man who sees the truth in the essential teaching of the East as in that of the West, who believes in the law of polarity, the law of synthesis,—the meeting of thesis and anti-thesis in rich unity. Here is a man who, like the *rishis* of old, teaches the truth of self-denial as the secret of civilisation and the art of life.

When the Rishi opened his lips to speak, I heard the

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words :—"My child! what brings you here from your studies in books and your search in great cities?"

And I wondered:—"How does he know?"

Then, looking at him again, I said:—"I come not in idle curiosity. I come in the spirit of a *jignasu*, a seeker. I come for answers to many questions of life."

And he said, again fixing his eyes on me:—"Whatever brings you here, I am happy to see you. I have little to tell you of the rituals of temples and churches, the labels and creeds of institutions and organisations. Nor may I tell you of the systems and images discussed in the books. These but widen the surface : they do not plumb the depths."

And I said :—"Speak to me, Sire! Your servant heareth."

He said :—"What I tell you will be as my Master may direct."

In an instant, as though in one swift intuition, I began to understand what in the books is told us of how near the true Guru is to his true disciple. The Master and the disciple do not live apart : the twain are one in consciousness, in function and in transmission of the Spirit. A disciple, indeed, cannot live apart from his Guru : for a disciple to be torn from his roots in the Guru is suicide.

The Rishi looked me straight in the eyes. For the first time I saw how handsome was he and how winsome were his eyes.

The Rishi said :—"My child! ask what you will."

And I said :—"Modern India is coming, more and more, under Western influences. Western industrial civilisation, reducing man to an 'economic category,' is absorbing the cities of India : and we are beginning to hear the voice of a new anarchism, threatening Hindu society. The tragedy of modern India is that the superficial has got the upper hand : and money has become the lord of life and its affairs. The cities whirr with machines.

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Yet in the hearts of a few is a growing aspiration for silence and a spiritual civilisation. How may such a civilisation be built?"

And the Rishi answered :—"Not by the political instruments of modern democracy. They are instruments not of peace but of war. Peace conferences will not give us a new world-order : they may sow the seed of new world wars. Modern politics touch life on the circumference : they do not know life at the centre. I believe in education more than in politics. But education must be inspired and directed by *rishis*, men of illumination. Such an education will integrate the character of the pupils and prepare them to become servants of India and Humanity."

"How does education integrate the character of the pupils?" I asked.

The Rishi said :—"True education liberates the mind and the heart. Narrowing concepts and narrowing passions are checked and eliminated through contact with a true teacher. Then is awakened and developed in the students a single *wide* interest. With a consciousness widened, with a mind aware of the vastness of the world, with a heart radiating sympathy to man and bird and beast, the pupil stands ready to go forth into the world and do his work in the sphere he chooses. This work becomes his *dharma*, his duty : through it he realises his own true self and thus he serves his ideal,—his God !"

"Do we not confront evil on the plane of work?" I asked.

"We do," said the Rishi. "For, often, work means friction, opposition, conflict, contradiction. Religion is release from evil. Modern nationalisms, with their democratic cries of free governments based on party programmes, have seized our souls, and in pursuit of politics and political ends, we have forgotten the Kingdom of God. We know not, alas ! why pain and moral evil have appeared in human life.

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Our life is rooted in a mystery. But we believe that they will go with a progressive building, on the Earth, of God's Kingdom, in which *rishis* will shape again the life of the nations, and the people, relieved of material misery and the ignorance which enslaves, will, with illumined minds and purified hearts, bear witness to the Lord and know why He comes to this earth, age after age."

And I asked :—"O, tell me if He will come again. O ! low I long to find Him."

The Rishi said :—"Look within to find the Master, even in this hour of the world's darkness and agony. Look within! He cometh inward : He cometh through the paths of the heart! If He stood before you now in a crowd, you would not know Him. For the eyes are not pure enough, and the mind wandereth after glamour. But let the heart be filled with purity and love of truth, and you will find Him within : and not only within but everywhere. The Master is now, here !"

And the Rishi's eyes were tear-touched.

I had stayed long enough, yet longed to stay longer. But there was so much in what the Rishi said to ponder upon, to review and to examine in the light of calm reflection, that I felt I must have some time to myself. So I asked permission to go. And I said :—"May I not come again?"

"Come when you will!"

"Then I shall come back tomorrow."

"By all means come," said the Rishi. "And may the blessings of the Master shine and shine on you!"

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THE PURE IN HEART

The next day, I arrived at the Rishi's Ashram, far from the "madding crowds" of men. I walked many miles and when I arrived at the Ashram, it was evening. The soft glow of the fading sunset colours suffused the tall trees of the Ashram with a strange beauty. The Rishi looked at me and greeted me with a smile. Then he opened his mouth and spake. The rhythm and cadence of his words captivated my heart.

He interpreted the saying of Christ :—"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God!"

And I asked:—"Does Christ mean what Krishna means by the 'single eye'? Krishna, in the Gita, asks for withdrawal of man into himself and for development of the hidden forces, with 'the inner eye concentrated,' to see the Light."

The Rishi said:—"Yes; the purity of which Christ speaks is not the ceremonial purity of the priest but the deep inward purity of the heart."

And I said:—"Krishna speaks of detachment, of casting all fruits of action : and Krishna speaks of 'inaction.'"

The Rishi said :—"Yes; Jesus emphasises 'purity of heart.' The 'single eye' is the discerning eye concentrated on God : the single eye is 'integrated vision.' When we stray from integrity, we are far from God. We are, as Krishna said, desire-driven, desire-dominated, prisoners of desire. A modern disciple of Christ,—Schweitzer,—has it in his mind when he speaks of the 'doctrine of reverence.' He who works with a view to fruits of action is a utilitarian, not a worshipper. He who is pure in heart works for values which are intrinsic, not instrumental. Rabia, the Muslim mystic of Baghdad, said :—'If I love Thee, Lord! for fear of hell or reward of

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heaven, I am far from Thee!' Rabia was pure in heart. So was St. Francis Xavier. He prayed:—

My God! I love Thee, not because
I hope for heaven thereby,
Not yet because who love Thee not
Are lost eternally !
Not in hope of gaining aught,
Not seeking a reward :
But as Thyself hast loved me,
O ever-loving Lord!

"Yes,—if we would see God, let us learn, first, in work and prayer, in thought and aspiration, to rise above mixed motives or instrumental values to a new world of intrinsic and eternal values of life."

The Rishi regretted that modern life, becoming more and more secularised and falling ever-increasingly under influences of industrialism, denied God, saying it saw Him not anywhere. The Rishi added:—"But to him who has developed the single eye, to the pure in heart, God is now, here, God is everywhere! To him who is pure in heart, God is in toil and labour, and God is in the silent service of lowly lives!"

And I said:—"Did not Krishna say that the name which was the dearest to him was *Daridra Narayana*? The poor ones, they who dwelt in broken cottages, were, indeed, pictures of the Lord."

And the Rishi said :—"Brother Lawrence was pure in heart. Did he not see the Lord in the kitchen at the wash-tub? And He, the Lord, is in the little things of life, in little creatures,—in birds, in fur and fish, in grass, in common bush, in leaf and flower, in fruit and drop of water,—and in the face of a little child!"

And I looked up and, gazing at the lit-up face of the Rishi, greeted God!

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THE WHEEL OF LIFE

The word, "rishi," literally means "seer." The Rishi was a seer. He saw the divine in life, in every man. A pure and noble vision of life in every one enriched his life.

To see him was to feel that he was no ordinary man. He was a man filled with awe and reverence. And passing by him you felt that to see him was to worship him.

In English we have the word, "genius." A *rishi* is a genius, but not every genius is a *rishi*. A genius is a man of heavenly gifts. The *rishis* and geniuses are the sovereign men of history. They are men of creative power.

The Gita's model man,—*sthitapragna*,—is the sage divine, the man of illumination and of tremendous will power. His secret is self-surrender,—to Krishna. Such a man we saw in our days : he was Mahatma Gandhi. A *rishi* is a *mahatma*. Such a man is far from the fuss and noise of life, yet reveals tremendous power, when challenged.

In the voice of the Rishi was the music of the flute. His words were a song and a parable,—a song of adoration to the Eternal, a parable unto seekers after God, the *jignasus*, who have the longing to know the truth.

Standing on the seashore, the Rishi said to us, one day :—

Look at yon sea! Behold the waves! How they rise and reach the zenith, then recede, retire and break !

One of the waves of the great Sea of Life is man. How he is born, and how, step by step, he reaches the zenith of his power and then recedes, retires, and is broken on the rock of *maya*.

Man becomes a doer of deeds. Then he turns to mist : he dies ! And his airy castles mingle with the dust. He dies

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and returns to birth. And in the wheel of birth and death he moves, again and again, until he becometh mist again.

He entereth into *pralaya*, passing into the Unmanifest, until the cycle of evolution starts again, and he cometh into a new birth on the plane of *maya*, the plane of manifestation.

When he passeth into *pralaya*, he becometh mist, formless, as the suns and moons become mist and, out of the nebulae, man comes back to earthly evolution,—until evolution itself is transcended and man goes into *nirvana*, the freedom of the Eternal.

Out of the mist into evolution : and out of evolution into the freedom of the Spirit.

Man is a wave that breaks on the shore of time. This wave moves, acts, sings, until the song itself is merged into the rhythm and melody of timelessness.

Death holds a glass before the proud and humbles him. So doth death take man to God. Kipling was born in India. And the essential intuition of India he expressed in a few simple words when he said :—"God never wasted a leaf or a tree. Do you think He would squander souls?"

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DIE AND LIVE!

It was Good Friday. The bells were ringing. In the Hall of the Ashram, we met, in holy silence.

The Rishi came. We bowed to him. His face was radiant. Not sorrow but compassion was in his eyes.

He spoke to us of death. His words were kindled with fire. He referred to Jesus and Socrates.

The Rishi said :—

Ye have died again and again. And, again and again, ye have been born. Today, the name of Jesus is on your lips. Meditate on his death.

Heroic was the death of Socrates : he drank the cup of hemlock, and there was serenity in his face. Jesus died on the cross with compassion in his eyes for all who condemned him to death. In the hour of death there was upon his lips the benediction of life :—"Father! forgive them, for they know not what they do!" Jesus, like the Buddha, was the Lord of Compassion.

Alas! he is still mocked, still unregarded in the counsels of the nations that call themselves Christian. His name has gone into the hymns and songs and the litereture of the West. But how few are they who sing him in daily life and speak of him in their actions and aspirations! Yet he looks on us all with compassion : he smiles upon our wayward ways.

The world crucifies him, again and again, trampling upon his silent brothers,—the poor and the weak, the lowly and the lost, the empty-handed "have-nots," and the homeless wanderers. Yet their agony he beholds with compassionate eyes. Churches have they built to him : yet they

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know him not. For they honour not the lonely and the lost, the poor and forlorn!

* * *

We meditated in silence, on the Cross and the crucifixion of Jesus. Then one of us said :— "Master! we fain would know of the mystery of death."

The Rishi said :—

If you will know of the mystery of death, you must be in tune with the heart-beats of life. For life is the River that floweth on, until it enters into the greater life that men call death, even as the Indus floweth on, until it enters into the Great Indian Ocean !

In life is hidden the dream of death, and in death is hidden the door to the life beyond this life. So fear not death. To die is to stand in the presence of life.

And before you stand in the Presence Supreme, you must, through death, drink of the waters of the River of Silence : and drinking in silence and coming to the other side, you glimpse the Light and your soul bursts into a Song of Joy !

Then, indeed, you discover the destiny of death. It is to lead you on to fuller, richer, more radiant life. In and through death, we make the great voyage of discovery!

And then you know that he doth truly live who dies to the "ego," the little "I." You realise that true life is aspiration to the timeless, not thirst for power. All thirst springs in time and perisheth in time : all thirst is "wandering." So Swedenberg says that all thirst for power comes from hell !

Alas! the vast majority of men miss the meaning of life : they become, as Balzac said, the "galley-slaves of ambition," and so they wander from unrest to unrest !

Life and death are one : for, what they mourn on this side as "death," they greet on the other side as "life"! Death is birth into a new life !

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Die and live ! Forgetting this, your life will be a moaning and a cry on this darkened earth ! Aspire to a life eternally new !

What is death? A withdrawal, a fading of the light of the *Atman* from the body, a sunset! But what is sunset here is sunrise elsewhere! Our earthly eyes see the sun sinking : but the sun sinketh not ! The sun shines on ! And the *Atman*, the Spirit, lives and works on, from eternity to eternity !

In the hour of death, think of the Lord and repeat the Holy Word, the Holy Name and, as you cross death, you will find that darkness travels towards light, and the light unveils the Face of the Beloved !

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THE BALANCED LIFE

At a Sunday gathering, one of us asked the Rishi :— "Master! many speak of work. A few speak of meditation and spiritual life. And we hear, more and more, in these days, of a New Order. We feel confounded. Speak to us that we may understand."

And the Rishi said :—

Work is essential. Spiritual life is a life of balance. Be balanced,—if you would attain. The purpose of life on this earth is to correct and balance oneself.

Work purifies and work disciplines us. And he who would meditate must first be purified through work. He must learn the lessons of practical life. He must not neglect duty or *dharma*.

Krishna tells Arjuna repeatedly to "stand up and do his *dharma* or duty." I must not neglect my duty to my family and society. I am linked with them *karmically*. I must discharge my debt to them.

The path of work is the path of purification : and purification precedes illumination.

Many speak, today, of a "New Order" and they ask for new laws and new adjustments in society and the state. Many, indeed, idolise the state, the "new state," as the source of new laws which would make the world new.

The world will not be new until we have more men with a world vision and with hearts of love. What can parchments of parliaments and laws of assemblies do? Wanted men! More men of the right type are needed,—men of sympathy and understanding, men of vision and love, men of self-control and self-effacement, men who have not merely

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"national" consciousness but "whole-consciousness," who see the " whole " as one, who behold the unity of all life.

They who behold the One in all and all in One,—they will rise above the barriers of creed and colour, of country and race. Unto them will be granted the power to build a New Order and a New Civilisation.

I cannot plead too often, then, in this day of materialism and chaos, on the side of the sages, for meditation and spiritual life.

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THREE STAGES IN MEDITATION

One day, in the silence of the dawn, the Rishi spoke to us a few words on meditation. He said :—

Meditation is a necessity of spiritual life. For spiritual life is realisation of unity. And when you meditate, you rise above separateness and enter into unity. In the hour of meditation, too, the Divine Spirit influences the pupil's heart. To bless is to pour out a spiritual force.

There are three main stages in meditation :—(1) you feel; (2) you hear; and (3) you see.

You feel a contact with the Guru, the Master. You feel his presence. You feel that he fills you.

Gradually, you hear a sound, a note of music. It comes from a point between the eye-brows or it emanates from the centre of the Heart. The Heart is referred to as *buddhi*. It awakens when you leave the *manas* (mind-centre) far behind. As you listen to the sound, you shed tears. It is a blessed experience. Tears are a sign that the Master has touched you.

At last, you see the *Sat Guru*. You see the Master in the "lotus" of the Heart. The vision comes at first as though it were a glimpse. Then the vision grows, until at last it is merged in the waking life. Meditation is, then, blended with your actions all the day and your consciousness and subconsciousness all the night. This seeing is illumination. The *buddhi* wakes up and you live in *atmabodha*,—in realisation of the *Atman* (the Spirit).

Then your heart trembles. And, as a flame is reflected in a drop of water, so is the divine flame reflected in your heart.

We name it love. God's love trembles in your heart.

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With it you do *arati* to Him. You offer Him His own.

In order that the divine flame may be reflected in your heart, rid it of the unreal (*asatya*), of sordid desire, ambition, egoism, self.

The marks of the man in whom burns the flame divine are the following three :—

1. Silence. He shuns noises and the clamour of crowds.

2. *Daya* or compassion. The door of his heart is open to all. He blesses the poor and lowly. He embraces the outcast and the sinner. He serves them all and, in serving them, grows in sanctity and strength.

3. *Advaita* or unity. He transcends "duty." He greets the Beloved in all,—in the sinner and the criminal. In hell, too, is his temple, for he sees the One in suffering and in sin.

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THE YOGI OF WISDOM

On the Vaisakhi Day we met again. The Rishi spoke to us of man passing from learning into wisdom, from desire into illumination. Such a man, he said, was flooded by the Light from within. Such a man was called a *gnani*, a *gnana-yogi*, a *gnana-bhakta*, a *yogi* of wisdom.

One of us asked :—"Master! what are the marks of such a man ?"

The Rishi said :—

Such a man, the *yogi* of wisdom, one who has attained, has the following marks :—

1. He understands that the actions of men spring from their *gunas*,—*satva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. And he finds that all these actions move on a plane of duality,—*dwanda*. He rises above this plane, above all *dwandas*. He transcends the three *gunas* (qualities).. He surrenders the reins of the three *gunas* to his Lord,—the *Sat Guru* within. His actions, then, spring not from the three *gunas*, but from an inner force, an urge of the Spirit.

2. His is a life of self-surrender. His daily prayer is:— " *Krishnam saranam gachchami !*" "I take Thy refuge, Lord!" And he sees the Lord seated in his Heart. He thinks on Him. He is devoted to Him. His joy is in Him, not in sense-delights. Whatever he does,—*yagna* or *tapas* or *dana*,—he offers unto Him. What peace follows such self-surrender!

There was a devotee of the Lord. She worked in the spirit of self-surrender. She built a small hut on a mountain. Her only companion there was a woman. She, alas! proved to be dishonest, malicious, untrue. She accused the devotee of hypocrisy and sorcery. Public opinion is so fickle. The

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majority of men do not think. Today, they applaud you : tomorrow, they stone you !

Public opinion forgot the devotee's good work. A wave of persecution started against her. She was abused, harassed, tormented. But she bore it all in absolute self-surrender to her Lord. And she prayed, every day, for them who persecuted her. She said:—"Lord ! bless them!"

A friend asked her why she prayed for them. She said :—"They furnish the purifying fire to cleanse me of dross and become pure gold."

The day arrived when the wave against her vanished, and the people saw that the devotee was, indeed, "pure gold."

3. He becomes *sama darshi*. He beholds the One in all. With the loss of the "ego," cometh the vision of Krishna in all, Vasudeva in all. He attains to balance.

He sees the Lord in the learned and the outcast. He knows that the Lord casteth out none : and there is neither great nor small to Him who maketh all. Mira was a queen, but she bowed down to Raidas, a cobbler : Raidas was a *bhakta* of the Lord. The poet Burns sang beautifully :—

In the darkness of the night and the winter's snow,
In the naked and the outcast : seek thou Love !

He is devoted to the welfare of all beings on earth. In him is the longing to serve all. For he knows that the Lord of all is the Lover of all : and divine beauty is everywhere. He knows that he who loveth not will fail to find the Lord even in millions of births.

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IS INDIA FREE?

The bells were ringing, and people in processions were singing: and in their thousands they were thronging to the Square to attend the meeting.

And the Rishi asked:—"Why is the town gay, today? And whither go these thousands?"

And a disciple said :—Master! today is the Day of Independence. And the people go to the Square to attend the huge meeting to be addressed by patriots. Will you not, also, come?"

And the Rishi went. And he listened to those who spoke with rejoicing in their hearts for the freedom of their country.

And the Rishi returned. A disciple said to him:—"Teach us concerning freedom!"

And the Rishi said :—

To the Square you kindly took me, this evening, and I saw the people prostrating themselves before the "leaders," and I heard young men shout and sing of freedom. And I said to myself :—"Alas! the angels are troubled for they look for light on earth but see it not : they see darkness!"

And brothers, see how in the day of your "freedom," men live crouched in conceit and deceit, how some even of the high-placed ones have lust and greed of gold, how the "patriots," too, strive to have a hold on the people by piling up adulation upon adulation.

And my heart bleeds within me! "A mad world, my Masters!" I say. See, brothers! there are chains around you: and, perhaps, the strongest of them is what you call "freedom,"—a glittering chain.

For you are not truly free if you have not renounced yourself

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in the service of the poor and the outcast, the lowly and the lost.

You are not truly free until you hold property not as a possession but as a "trust."

You are not truly free until you wander as homeless *akinchinas* to feed the hungry and clothe the naked and kindle light in the midst of darkness.

You are not truly free if you have not purified your hearts of desires and ambitions and impulsions of the flesh.

Would you pull down the despot and the bureaucrat? See, first, if the despot and the bureaucrat are not enthroned in your hearts!

When passions sway and stormy throngs dominate, there is mob rule : it is not freedom.

Within you is the Kingdom of true Freedom. To that Kingdom belongs character. And prophets of freedom are they who would not be slaves of passion.

We rise to freedom through self-discipline. Without it we dwell amid fear and fetters. Indeed, he only merits freedom who daily conquers himself, his desires and appetites, a new !

* * *

And one asked :—"Is India free?"

The Rishi said:—

Not yet! Chaotic elements are growing: turbulance is increasing. Forces are astir which, I believe, will collide with governments. Communal strife is not subsiding. Hunger of the masses still reminds us that we have not yet wiped off the humiliation of the past century. The double crisis of agrarian tension and over-population is upon us. The proudest and the most precious achievement of India, her culture and civilisation, are being over-run by Soviet forces and Western civilisation, their industrialisms and their techniques of aggression.

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India is in danger of losing what little she has achieved. A Communist revolution, once started in India, may last longer than most of us may know. India's freedom is, indeed, vital to a renewal of true civilisation : and I have always discountenanced the defeatism which holds that India is exhausted and dying.

Without freedom what would India be? And without India where would the world be? So my appeal to the Indians is :—"Brothers! awake! arise in the life of the Spirit and blaze, as once did blaze the beacon fires to the Indians who, when asked, "Who are you?" humbly answered:—"We are but pilgrims on this Earth!"

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CAN THE DROP DENY THE SEA?

We met again at the feet of the Rishi. One of us said :— "The wave is rising, the wave of atheism. There is a rising revolt of youth against religion. Many deny God. Can we blame them ? Do they not say religion has discredited itself by persecutions, massacres and wars ? In East and West alike how many have not been slaughtered in the name of religion ?"

And the Rishi said :—

What you say is painfully true. The story of religion is a tragic tale. The disciples have, again and again, entombed their Masters. Religion was meant to bind men into one Brotherhood, one Fellowship of service and love. But religions have proved renegades to the teaching of their Masters. And religions have rent asunder the garment of unity, the "seamless robe" of righteous living.

You ask me where I found religion. Where? Where I abandoned religions ! And I found God when I found the Kingdom which is greater than any kingdom on earth,—the Kingdom in my soul! Silence led the way to this Kingdom!

I blame not them that deny God. They live in noise and excitement. I ask you to practise silence. Then open your eyes and you will see Him in the light, and close your eyes and you will behold Him in the heart within. Then may you realise that you are never alone, that God and you, God and the universe, are inseparable.

Can the drop deny the sea ? Can the daisy deny the sun? Can the spark deny the flame? Can the leaf, the flower, the fruit, deny the root? Can the child deny the mother? No more can I deny God.

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Where, then, you ask, is God? He is in thy house, Brother! He is within thee! In thy soul! Run not to Kashi nor Rome nor Jerusalem nor Mecca. He is in thy heart. Call Him with the cry of longing! Call Him with the tears of love! Call Him with the yearning of a child for its mother! And thou wilt not say :—"God is nowhere!" Thou wilt say :—"God is now, here!"

Feeling Him, finding Him within thy heart, thou wilt not look scornfully on any man, on any religion. Thou wilt see the One in all. In the adorations and prayers of all men, in the benedictions and invocations of all sages and saints, thou wilt see the flow of rivers into the One Sea! For, in truth, are all prayers but aspirations to the One Light, and the goal of every pilgrim on the path of life is to be a holy one in whom Truth may bloom into Beauty and Beauty into Joy!

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BE STILL AND YOU WILL KNOW!

The Janmashthmi Day was drawing nigh. The Rishi instructed us to go into silence for two hours on the day preceding the day sacred as the birthday of Child Krishna. And on asking the Rishi to speak to us a few words concerning silence, the Rishi said:—

The Kingdom of the Spirit is within. And to commune with it, you must go into silence.

Men wander in the quest outside themselves. They forget that He, the *Atman*, is within.

Temples and churches and mosques have their value, indeed. But He,—the Diamond of great price,—is in your own hearts. And he who seeketh it shall find it in himself.

God is the Silent Spirit and dwelleth within. And you must be quiet as the growing blade, quiet as the morning light, to reach the Silent One.

Sit in silence, each day, and pray the prayer of the mariners :—"My boat is so small and Thy sea is so wide. So help me, Lord !"

Life is full of din and rush and hurry. You must renew your will. You must purify your hearts. You must protect yourselves against the storms which beat, again and again. So go into the Interior Castle, to the serene quiet of the soul!

Settle yourselves in silence, and you will greet God within you.

Books and scrolls are ashes and dust : and from human creeds and schools and schemes the Light goes out. Take from your hearts the strain and stress of life. Be still in the soul within you, and you will know!

Practise silence for sometime, every day, and you will arrive at the "discovery of the soul."

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Silence will develop the telepathic perception of the heart, and you will become aware of many things hidden from you at this hour..

Silence will cleanse your sight and you will see better and, one day, perhaps, you will see that the world around you is suffused with a strange, unearthly light!.

Practise silence, and the spark divine that dwells in your heart will grow into a flame of light and shine on, leading you nearer and nearer to God,—the Light Supreme!

In silence the soul is attuned to the Spirit. In being thus attuned, you know better the piteous need of the world, and you are better prepared to serve suffering humanity.

Cultivate silence, and you will receive the grace of God to bear and to suffer. The civilisation which surrounds us will not be purified and will not advance to a higher stage without an influx of grace.

Cultivate silence, and you will be freed of the fret and fever of life. You will listen to the small voice within. You will learn to work quietly, simply and, therefore, effectively.

Cultivate silence, and you will be purified and so enabled to work without ambition and passion, without desire for pleasure and love of gain, without scramble for name or fame. You will work with a new sense of reliance on the One who thinks of you and who pours the strength and the understanding you need as you stand on the battlefield of life.

Never forget that the resolve to do real work always starts in silent moments.

Remember, when you settle yourself in silence and humble yourself before God, that He gives you new strength to serve, new love to bear the burden of your brothers and sisters who stumble in this world of tragedy and tears.

Go into silence, renouncing the words of men. And, in

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silence, wait upon the Lord, and He will give you the Cross to bear, and your tongue will be loosened, and you will speak to the sons and daughters of men as never man spake before!

Life is meant to be a *yagna*,—a sacrifice to the Lord. And *yagna* is offered in silence. The world is a *tapobana* (forest of meditation) to him who learns to worship the Lord in solitude. He may not see the stars but he beholds the glory of God within himself, and the very desert blooms for him as a rose garden of beauty.

Silence the storms of the flesh and sit mute within yourself. Then listen to the voices speaking directly to you :—"My child! enter now into the City of Joy!"

Step by step, must you ascend to God,—laying your senses to sleep and purifying your mind of desires. So, fixing your gaze on the Golden Light within you, you rise to the Lord, until you transcend yourself, you transform yourself, you become divine!

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THE OPEN SECRET

On the Janmashthmi Day,—sacred as Sri Krishna's Birthday,—we met together, at the Rishi's feet, in a beautiful garden on the Jamuna. All around was quiet. We all were eager to listen to the Rishi.

He said :—

This day, let me speak to you of "religion." Krishna was a lover of silence : and we are here, today, listening to the very heart of silence.

Krishna reflected the Nameless One and was still. Who dare name His Name ? And who dare suppress his heart and say, "There is no God" ? The Secret Eternal is the Open Secret of the universe and shineth in the stars above and in the Love Immortal of your hearts.

Krishna worshipped the One. And whoso in the heart within him worshippeth God, gravitates to God and becometh God. The heart within him is the God-heart. Such a heart realises that religious forms are husks : the core, the kernel, of all religions is aspiration to Truth and Love.

Such a heart realises, too, that in the New Age which is emerging, religions, too, blend one with the other, more and more, until they grow together like botanical cells and form a single World-Tree,—the *aswatha*, of which the Gita speaks, under whose shadows nations and races may well rest in unity and fellowship.

Religion, then, is not "creed," not *shariat*. Religion is *Haqiqat*, Truth : and its crowning stage is *Ma'rfat*, "mastership," "self-mastery," perfection, coming home to God.

To be substantially "oned,"—united,—to God is to attain to the highest stage of the new life which is radiant with the

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Light of God, rich in wisdom and vitality,—so that he who hath it works not in his unaided strength but in a new miraculous strength,—the strength of God!

Yes; religion is life, new life, which includes all life,—action no less than contemplation.

This new life is a life of song,—the Song of God, the *Bhagavad Gita.*

We who have not yet attained to the new life are as song-birds in a cage : and we act cabined, cribbed, confined. We act as bondsmen, not as free children of God. And our worship is become a routine, a convention, not a window opened from dawn to dawn for the soul to commune with the Spirit and rejoice in Him for evermore.

We build our temples with bricks or stones : we forget that the temple to which the Lord doth call us to worship Him and receive His sacrament is the temple of life.

We worship God in *mandirs* or mosques, in chaples or churches. We forget Him in the field and the factory, in the school and the market place.

We pray to a God "in Heaven" : we do not see Him around us, playing with children, radiant in flowers, singing in rain, in stream and sea, in songs of the air and woods and waterways.

We echo creeds and scriptures : we do not see the glory of God in the heart within!

This "seeing" is knowledge, wisdom! "Knowledge of the Eternal," says a sage of China, "is illumination." Religion is wisdom, is knowledge, is illumination. Its way is symbolised, sometimes, as the way of *agni.* As the Rishi of the *Taittiriya Brahmana* says :—"Thou, Agni, art our thread and bridge : thou art the path leading to the Gods." And God is *not* the "breaker" but the "fulfiller" of Gods!

For illumination yearns the Heart of man. The way of religion is the way of inner renunciation. It is the way of

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the Buddha and Francis, of Krishna and Jesus, of Chaitanya and Nanak. They who walk this way say to God as doth the lover to his beloved :—"Thine alone and forever."

For man is restless till he rests in Him : and without Him is man in tragic loneliness. And his anguished soul cries out, again and again, in this house of clay,—cries out in hymns of aspiration:—"Whither shall I go to find Thee, O Light! in this world of darkness, and to commune with Thee, O Life! in this world of dreams and death?"

"Whither shall I go to find Thee?" So doth everyone question himself. And the answer to the question? Go within! Look into the Heart! See Him there! See and rejoice! Recall the words of the great mystic of Iran :—

Cross and Christians
From end to end I suryeyed :
He was not there!

To the temple I went :
To the ancient pagoda, too :
He was not there!

I went to the mountains
Of Herat and Kandhar :
I looked, again and again :
He was not there!

I gazed into my own heart :
Then I cried :—"Here Thou art!
Thou, the Heart of my heart!"

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THE TEMPLE OF LIGHT

It is difficult to forget the day we spent with him, last year : it was sacred to us as his birthday. We had a worship in the Ashram gardens at 4 A. M. There, as we sat spell-bound in the beauty of dawn and the silence of nature, he spoke a few words to which we listened as we would to a lyrical song.

The Rishi said :—

You ask me to speak to you this day. The deepest is never spoken.

What is worship? That which is never clothed in words.

What is religion? That which transcends all speech.

Would you commune with God ? Knock, continue to knock at the door of the Mystery !

The dawn and the sunrise, Krishna and Christ, the benedictions of the Buddha and the aspirations of all the saints are silent. They send out vibrations which you receive as song and music.

To worship is to touch the Mystery which reveals to you an Infinity in which man is but a grain of sand : and all religions and all prophets are seen as linked together in the one Love of God.

The true temple excludeth none,—not the *harijan*, the sweeper, not my brother, the *bhangi*.

The true church calleth no man a "heathen," but sees the Krishna and the Christ of love in every soul.

The true mosque never doth oppress a human being. The true mosque is built not with bricks or stones. The true mosque is built in the hearts of the seekers, the seers and the saints.

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So beware, ye who confound religion with creeds !

Hidden is God,—within you, in the divine abyss, in the depths of the waiting soul.

He is the Light that shineth in every human heart. He is the Kingdom of Heaven. None is an isolated individual.

There is no sin but has its roots in separation. Long have men sat in the darkness of isolation without seeing the Light which makes them all one in God.

Religion transforms in silence the individual, recreates him afresh and draws him out of solitude into fellowship with the one God in all !

So doth self die in the soul of man. And when self, "ego," *aham*, dies, the Eternal God awakes!

So doth the individual awake to act with the energies which are immortal. So doth he realise that his hands are not his, nor his feet his, but God's instruments to do good. And he doeth good who blesses the poor and lowly, and who sees that his eyes are not his but God's through which He looks with compassion on the world.

To worship is to realise that the heart hath its home in God!

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THE SONG OF THE LORD

We met again on the Gita Jayanti Day. We asked the Rishi to speak to us on the significance of the Day.

The Rishi said:—

One meaning of the word, "jayanti," is "birthday." This Day is regarded as the birthday of the Teaching enshrined in the Gita. This day, five thousand years ago, Sri Krishna gave the great "revelation" unto Arjuna. Sri Krishna spoke the wisdom of the Gita on the battlefield of Kurukshetra.

The Gita claims to be a "dialogue,"—a communion of souls,—between Krishna and Arjuna. Beautiful is this Book not only in the music of its words but, also, in its thought and its vision.

The inner beauty of the Gita has ravished the minds and hearts of many in many lands. I do not know how many translations there are of this single book. I believe there is no other book in literature which is loved by so many millions of human beings as the Bhagavad Gita. I believe there is no other book in which philosophy and poetry are blended with each other so beautifully as in the Bhagavad Gita.

And century after century, this ancient scripture has been referred to as the "milk" of the Upanishads. The word, "milk," means "concentrated essence." In this one single book you have the concentrated essence of the message and teaching of a long line of the *rishis* of India. The Gita is the cream of Aryan culture.

Whence cometh its power if not from some great fountain of spiritual life? This fountain flows from the heart of a Holy One who has, through the centuries of India's history, remained a symbol of eternal youth.

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He took up the Flute : and as he sang, the music of his heart rang through the souls of multitudes. His song,—the "Song of God,"—still our hearts doth sway, while crowns and kingdoms have passed away.

The Gita is not a book in abstract philosophy. The Gita has a personal appeal to the heart. Again and again, rises in the Teaching of the Master the moving, thrilling note:—" Come unto Me !"

It is this personal appeal in the Gita,—Krishna's call to the soul,—which lingers in my heart. And I can understand why the great German scholar, Schlegel, on reading the Gita was so thrilled as to say:—"The Gita is the deepest and sublimest book in literature." Schlegel felt, as I have felt, again and again, that "it is blessed to have lived to study this Book," and to try every day to translate it into life and commune with its central mystery !

The Gita shows that Krishna could be active in the midst of contemplation and contemplative in the midst of action. And every one is called to become Krishna-like,—to become a Flute of the Master. The wind plays upon the flute and it sings. Blessed is the man on whom the wind of the Spirit plays as on a musical instrument. "Make me Thy Flute!" is the cry of Krishna's *bhakta.*

The cumulative stress and strain of our days threatens the foundations of modern civilisation. The Gita calls us to a new sense of kinship with all countries and all creatures, kinship with the poorest and the humblest of all living things. The Gita asks Arjuna to know that he has his brothers "in air and water and the silent wood."

No creed of "racialism" taints the teaching of the Gita. Krishna's teaching is one of integration. One Life pulsates in all beings, one single principle underlies all science and philosophy, all knowledge and art, all literature and social ethics.

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The Gita claims to be a revelation of Krishna. But revelation is not a static deposit. Revelation is dynamic and enriches history, again and again. So is the life of man renewed, age after age.

The Gita is, to me, not final, nor the last word in God's dealings with man. The scripture which we call the Gita is but a fragment, I submit, of the Greater Gita yet to be revealed to man.

There are degrees and levels of consciousness. And when consciousness will rise to a higher level, a richer revelation will, I believe, be made manifest and a greater Light will shine.

Man has crossed his childhood. Man is yet to come of age. And a fuller manifestation of the wisdom awaiteth him.

The Gita is a wave of eternal melody,—a wave that sings and is heard on the shores of time.

But is there not, also, the wave that breaks in that boundlessness whose sound no man may hear?

The Gita is a heard melody,—a song we hear and sing.

But beyond the heard is the unheard in us. Beyond the *vyakta* is the *avyakta*. And it is the *avyakta*, the unheard, which enshrines the rhythm and melody of the deepest within us. The heart-beats of the *avyakta* shape our destiny.

The Gita sings of the freedom of man. The Avyakta Gita sings of that greater freedom which will come when a larger number of free men,—free souls, *jivan muktas*,—make a pilgrimage to the Earth plane to emancipate not man alone but, also, brother animal,—the bird and the beast.

Alas! we slay them, today. In the purer, brighter morrow to come, we shall learn to love them and serve them and, through loving association and fellowship with them, take them, rung by rung, up the ladder of evolution, leading them to God! So may all creatures be seen united in the One Brahman. How beautiful are the words in the Gita :—

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Who sees his Lord
Within every creature,
Deathlessly dwelling
Amidst the mortal,—
That man sees truly !

Who sees the separate
Lives of all creatures
United in the One Brahman,
Brought forth from Brahman,
Himself findeth Brahman

The Gita emphasises the truth that "better than inaction is activity." "Act, but with self-control. Perform thy actions, but as worship of God." "Perform thy actions sacramentally." So step by step, a man may rise beyond desires until, at last, he conquers desires. And when he hath no lust nor hatred, he "walks unafraid amid the things of lust and hatred."

The Truth of all truths, the Gita urges, is Love. This supreme affirmation of the Gita has been the turning point in the lives of many *bhaktas* (devotees) of Krishna, many who have rejoiced in the way of the Gita.

With joy unspeakable have I, again and again, read the following words in the Gita and, reading them, have shed tears and touched the Feet of Krishna :—

Though a man be soiled
With the sins of a lifetime,
Let him but love Me,
Dedicated to Me,
In utter devotion (bhakti) :
He is henceforth not a sinner !
Blessed beyond all words is he !
He is holy !

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THE LITTLE WAY

The dawn, in russet mantle clad, descended on the hill, and the Rishi's heart was filled with joy. Five of us were with him : and he closed his eyes and, in the beauty of the hill and in the silence of his soul, he prayed and he communed with the spirit within him and the spirit of nature. And we gazed at his beauteous face,—calm, radiant, awake with the freedom of the river and the stream.

And when he opened his eyes, we saw them shining with a strange, unearthly light. And one of us said:—"Master! tell us of the way of wisdom."

And the Rishi said :—

Wisdom is never told, is never taught. The teacher teacheth not, but he reflects the Light, and lets his followers see the Light as it shineth upon him : and the teacher leads them, step by step, to the threshold of the temple of their souls, where shineth the Light within them.

The teacher teacheth not. His vision is incommunicable. For each must walk the way alone, until he stands in the presence of the wisdom that is above all words and above the mind!

May not a little of the way of wisdom be told to the few who aspire and are ready to wander through the flames and, in every thought and every act, sing the song of Love?

The way of wisdom is the way of self-surrender to Love. Rigid formulas of prayer must give way to wordless prayer, to inward prayer. Books and theologies are unavailing.

The way is the hidden way. If you will truly know, keep away from the shouts and shows of life. Be hidden in the Hidden God !

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The way is the little way. Be a little child! Practise surrender to the Lord in little things, the insignificant things of every-day life. In the practice of small things, the practice of the Divine in the midst of daily duties, is the secret of him who would truly know.

Big things the Lord asketh not of you. Bring to Him little things. "A leaf, a flower, a fruit, a little water,"—offered in love are by Him accepted in joy. Bring to Him little flowers. Offer Him little acts of service and love!

Read in that little book, *A Saint of the Twentieth Century*, the story of a girl,—only eight years old,—who is Ill, her fever developing into consumption : but she smiles on! She smiles,—and she serves. She goes to a neighbouring hospital and she passes on flowers to children and she speaks a few words of comfort to some of the men and women lying ill in the hospital. Herself ill, she smiles on! Her joy is in little things. So smiling, so serving, she walks the little way. She vanishes as vanisheth a drop of water in the wide sea. She is hidden in the Hidden One. She,—her ego,—vanishes : only the One remains!

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AT THY LOTUS-FEET

One winter evening, I arrived at the Ashram and looked again at the calm, radiant face of the Rishi. He greeted me with a quiet, gentle smile on his lips. A group was around him. They sat there with eyes of shining expectation.

One of us said to him :—"Master ! teach us to pray !"

And the Rishi said :—

Thus I aspire and thus I pray at the Lotus-feet of the Lord :—

O Lord ! guard Thou the poor, for they cry for bread, and they wander homeless in the autumn rains and cold of winter !

Have mercy on them whom men have made criminals by denying them work and bread and then have chained them in jails !

O Lord ! guard Thou the needy and the weak who knock at the door of the proud and receive insults or abuse.

Watch Thou over them who lie prostrate in pain of illness.

O Lord ! bless the little birds. They sing the songs which purify the heart. And protect the mild-eyed cow and the dog and the horse and every beast from the cruel hand of man.

O Lord ! protect the trees and the fields from thunder and storm and from the ravages of wild barbarians who, with the war-shout on their lips, wander in violence and lust !

Open the hearts of all who claim kinship with humanity that they may aspire to peace and brotherhood.

Bless the fish in the sea and the reptiles and insects of the earth : for they, too, are Thy children !

And Thy Way is Mercy and Thy Name is Love !

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THE CHILD SOUL

We met together at the Rishi's feet on a day sacred to Hindu *bhaktas*. On that day, a pretty little cradle may be seen in a Hindu household. In the cradle is seen a toy,—an image,—of *Bala Gopala*, Child Krishna. The cradle is swung and songs are sung to Shyama, the Babe Divine of Brindaban.

One of us asked the Rishi to speak to us of children and the call of the child to man.

The Rishi said :—

The child is still a Mystery to me. Does God come in the little ones to teach our hard and wayward hearts ?

Children come with radiant faces and singing hearts. Do they not come to renew the child-heart that slumbers still in the grown-up ones?

The simple child-soul will save civilisation and lead us to gentleness and purity, to humble-mindedness and to simple-hearted faith in "Our Father in Heaven."

Great kingdoms crumble to their fall : and God grows weary of thrones and dynasties. But God is radiant in the roses and the rosy faces of little children.

When the disciples asked Jesus who was the greatest in the Kingdom of God, he called a little child unto him and set him in the midst of them and said :—"Verily, I say unto you, except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven. But he who humbles himself as this little child,—he is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven."

Mystery-filled are the children, and radiant are they as stars. They come as witnesses to our Unseen Home. In the eyes of a child floweth Eternity : and in the heart of a child is the light that heals!

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Philosophers have evolved systems and built up schools. But I know of no better touchstone for truth and falsehood than the child-heart !

Kingdoms lie prostrate at the feet of conquerors, and kingdoms crumble to dust, one day. But there is a Kingdom that crumbles not,—a Kingdom untouched by time. It is the Kingdom of Light. Of that, the child-heart is a symbol.

Riches and glories of the Earth pass away : but in the pure eyes and lisping words of a child may lie hidden the wisdom that abides.

In the early hour of the dawn, Guru Nanak found that one child always came and stood behind the Guru, while he sat in devotion. And one day, the Guru said to the child :— "What is it that brings you here so early in the dawn when others are in their beds asleep? You are so young : why do you disturb your sleep?"

And the child said :—"Sire ! my mother once asked me to give fuel to the fire. Then I saw that the smaller and feebler splinters burnt away earlier than the thicker and older ones. Then I said to myself :—'It is true, I am a child. But who knows death may come to me earlier than to those who are my elders? Let me not spend my time in sleep ! Let me awake even when I am a child !' This thought, sire ! brings me to your feet so early in the dawn, every day !"

This child spoke words of wisdom. And Guru Nanak was delighted and said to him :—"Child ! henceforth wilt thou be called *Buddha*,—Bhai Buddha (wise brother)." And Bhai Buddha had a unique place in the Sikh community.

I have looked at children. I have seen them sit silent. And I have, sometimes, felt they understand things better than the grown-ups. Are they thought-readers ?

Do not disregard what the little ones say to you. A child will say suddenly :—"Do not do that !" You will do well

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to listen to what the little one says to you.

Don't be rough to them ! Understand them ! And to understand them you should love them. You, then, may know that life is beautiful. You, then, may cling to this faith of childhood in the face of all the disappointments of difficult days.

O ye that would grow in the life of the spirit ! go and hug your children to your hearts and kiss your little ones in the cradle and beneath the stars ! Love your children and ask them to bless you and your earth-pilgrimage !

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BLESSED ARE THEY

Beneath the trees he sat, as he reached the hills. The sun was sinking. And in the dim twilight of the setting sun, we asked him :—"Master! what are the marks of him who lives and moves and hath his being in the Perfect Life!"

And the Rishi said :—

Blessed are they who bring Him no fruit, nor flower nor leaf: for they who come with empty hands are filled !

Blessed are they who extinguish desires : for they abide in peace!

Blessed are they who live in open houses : for they break their chains, and the wind of the Spirit bloweth upon them, carrying to far-off corners their song and their speech!

Blessed are they who wrestle with the storms : for they shall gather strength in God!

Blessed are they who are stripped and become naked for His sake : for they shall be clothed with the garments of light !

Blessed are they who go upon their way with singing in their hearts : for the song of the search liveth for ever in the gains of eternity!

Blessed are they who learn to sit in silence : for they shall hear the song of the *Atman*, the Eternal Self !

Blessed are the serene in spirit : for they shall be mirrors of the Eternal Self!

Blessed are the compassionate : for they shall be one with Humanity,—one with the Brotherhood of Life!

Blessed are they whose hearts are cleansed of passion and greed of gold : for they shall be free!

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PILGRIMS ON THE ROAD

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's Day we observed in the Ashram with joy and reverence. A group of Vaishnavas joined in worship. Sri Chaitanya was Love incarnate.

One of us said to the Rishi :—"Master! speak to us of love, this day sacred to Sri Chaitanya."

And the Rishi said :—

Love is the Great Vishnu that heals. From gazing at His Face every atom becomes articulate, and the Earth and the Heavens sing a song!

The tidings of Love travel from star to star : and Love giveth strength to the sun to burn and, by burning, convert rock-stones into nuggets of gold!

The music of Love may be heard in the air, morning, noon, and night! This music makes the Earth holy,—and heroic.

Love is the cry of the Heart and calleth to the City of Union. And he who heareth the call remembers the One, until "self" is forgotten!

The path of Love is not paved with roses. The path of Love is covered with flames, and they call you to enter the Sacred Fire as a *yagna* to the Eternal!

And when Love plucks you out of the Fire and pours out all you have and are as an offering to the universe, it blooms in beauty, and angels call you blessed! Sweet is the pain of Love : and in sweet pain is pain forgotten!

Love snaps the bond of desire and twists every snare of sin. Love desireth not : yet Love is rich in aspiration.

Love aspires to live remote from the foolish babble of multitudes and be seated in silence by the side of the Beloved

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or be mingled in ecstasy, which only the infinite stars may gaze upon or the bright-plumed birds may see and, seeing, bless !

Love aspires to be like a stream that runs to melt in the sea and, as it flows on, sings.

Love aspires to bleed on the Cross in service of the Beloved!

And Love crucified becomes God's pure mirror wherein is the *Atman* seen united to the Eternal. In Love the twain are one : they live in each other.

Some years ago, there lived a man who was wealthy and refined, and he was purifed by suffering and renunciation. And he married a woman who was, also, refined and of a spiritual type. The two were in tune with each other. In the love each had for the other, the two lived in each other. When, one day, on a journey to her relatives she fainted, his heart, too, seemed to stand still for a moment. And, on another occasion, when he pricked himself with a needle, she, too, felt it, though she was at a distance. And when she died, the two still lived in each other ! He heard her voice every day in his heart ! Love purified by suffering and selflessness made the two one!

Love is alone in the midst of crowds. But Love is at home in the company of the Beloved.

By Love, therefore, is God "gotten and holden," saith a medieval mystic, "but by thought never."

God is Love. What is Truth itself without Love? Truly saith Pascal:— "We make an idol of Truth itself : for Truth apart from Love is not God but His image and idol!"

Love asks for no earthly things. Love asks only for Love! A Sufi Poet sings :—

A beggar, Lord, I ask of Thee
More than a thousand kings could ask.
Each one wants something, which he asks of Thee.
I come to ask Thee to give me Thyself!

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He who would be a pilgrim on the Road of Love,—he must be humble as dust : and his heart must empty before he can receive the treasures of the Spirit!

Such a pilgrim loveth all without distinction of creed or caste. And he rejoiceth in serving the small, the lowly and the lost. He becomes a sanctuary to all whom the world condemns as sinners, criminals, outcasts of society!

The pilgrims on the Road of Love are the Sons of God, born of grace. And they abide in Light. But they who love not dwell in darkness.

Of such pilgrim-souls are the strings of life attuned to the Eternal and at every touch sounds the one music divine,—the Music of Love!

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